

# Canine Bulletin

Nebraska Task Force - 1

June 2001

## Canine Policies

*Submitted by: John Huff*

In my role as Task Force Program Manager, I rely heavily upon many others to assure that the different aspects of NETF-1 are always ready. I rely upon logistics to assure that the equipment is ready, I rely upon LFD's training division to assure that on going training needs are met, I rely upon FEMA to assure that nationwide program management is in place, and last but not least I rely upon individual members of the Task Force to be ready to go.

Of the many individuals it takes to make up our team, no one gives more than the canine search specialist. When I see our canine members and their handlers working in the field, either in a training scenario or a real life disaster, I stand in awe of the incredible ability of both. I realized long ago that canine search team members were different

than other members of the team. Different in that they live a daily life style that includes on-going preparation for a mission that can not be predicated when or where and may not happen for years. Yet even with this uncertainty, the preparation continues.

As a Task Force Leader, I have an obligation to assure that when called upon, our team can "get the job done". In order to do this, I must make sure that all of our "tools" are ready to go. This includes our canine "tools". Some might wonder why NETF-1 has adopted the canine policies that we have. I can tell you that our purpose is to be assured that when we deploy on a mission, our canine and handlers like other Task Force members, are able to do the task at hand.

Since the inception of the FEMA

US&R program, we have learned many lessons. One of those lessons was there have been other task forces that have deployed with canine, that should not have been. These canines were not capable of doing the work. The problem occurred for two reasons, Task Force Leaders (like me) did not understand what a "capable" dog was and canine search specialist did not understand what was expected of them. Today nearly 10 years into the program, we don't have the luxury of these excuses. Over the last 10 years, a national canine certification program has evolved, and task forces like NETF-1 have developed local tools to assure that canines were competent. Our tool is the Canine Search Guide and policies.

I was prompted to write for the Canine Newsletter to give everyone my position on our Canine Policies. I want everyone to know that our policies are the result of thoughtful discussion, and real life experience. I also want to assure our current and future canine search specialists, that these documents are dynamic and evolving, and constantly under review for improvements.

Thanks again to everyone for their efforts!! |



Got Drugs?

This Turkish drug dog certainly thought so! Hey, Doborah, what *did* you have in that bag I borrowed???

*Submitted by:  
Elaine Sawtell*



Mail your training logs to:  
Sandy Yost  
1801 "Q" Street  
Lincoln, NE 68508

# Who Wants to be a Canine Search Specialist?

Submitted by Elaine Sawtell

Can you answer these questions?

1. Who is required to turn in training logs monthly?
2. How much is the yearly stipend for Category 1 and 2 teams?
3. How often is the Canine health Record required to be submitted for ALL canines?

You won't win a million dollars for correctly answering these questions, but these and more are covered in the NETF-1 Canine Search Guide.

This document is the result of a coordinated effort between task force administration and canine handlers to develop policies and procedures to:

1. Assure Canine Search Specialists understand their role in the task force as they progress through training and certification.
2. Assist the task force in deploying only qualified teams and in a fair manner.
3. Clarify roles and expectations of the task force administration and handlers.

## Let's take a fly-over of the guide:

We start with a statement of the purpose and procedures for commencing participation in CSS training.

Categories of canine teams are then defined, followed by the NETF-1 Deployment Policy. This section clearly sets out the process initiated by the task force administration when the task force is activated.

Cadaver: This policy is currently under revision.

Our pretest policy adheres to that in the National Standard, with the exception that we ask a little more of our teams by urging the pretest be conducted at a location other than the normal training site. This gives a clearer picture of the team's true ability and readiness to test and/or deploy.

The General Canine Requirements are very broad and cover only physical health and basic mental stability. Physical requirements for handlers are likewise very general and basic in nature.

Questions regarding airline travel, who is eligible to attend CSS school, the annual stipend, equipment and funding issues are addressed and clarified, along with participation in demos and representing the task force.

The Appendix contains the NETF-1 Training Progression. Like all of the canine guide, this step-by-step process of training is official policy of the task force. It is designed and written to aid the handler in how to proceed to the goal of developing a quality search dog in a logical sequence.

Also a part of the appendix is the Cadaver Proficiency Evaluation as currently written.

The Canine Health Record and a breakdown of LFR and canine handlers' responsibilities and also delineated in the appendix.

No documents can answer every question, but it's always a good idea to follow the old adage, "As a last resort, read the instructions." Then, if you have further questions, ASK!

Answers:  
1. Category 1 and 2 teams (page 5)  
2. \$300 (page 5)  
3. Yearly (page 11)

## How Do I Submit Items for the Canine Bulletin?

Mail, E-mail, or Fax items to:

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# Changes

Also contact

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